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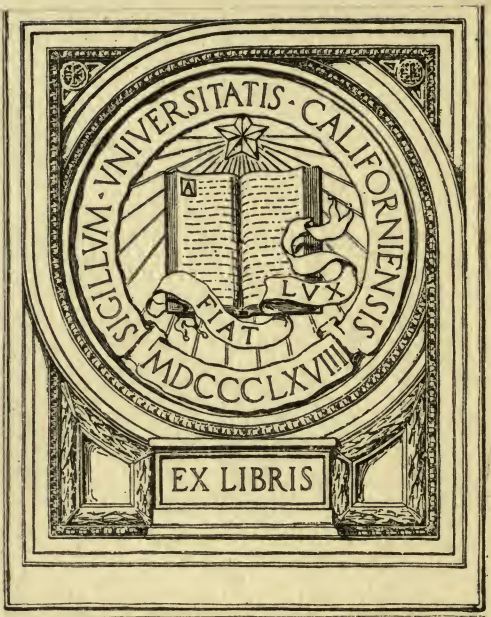
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WRITTEN ENGLISH

WRITTEN ENGLISH

A Guide to the Rules of Composition

BY

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PREFACE

THIS little book pretends to be in no sense a text-book of grammar or rhetoric. It tries to give as briefly as possible such hints and reminders as all but the most experienced writers are sometimes glad to have. We have sought, not to treat the subject exhaustively, but on the contrary to omit all but the matters that in practice prove troublesome. A certain mass of errors, due to carelessness as much as anything else, appear in the writing of every Freshman class; and we have assumed that those same errors probably trouble the average graduate of the High Schools, whether he is a college student or not. We hope to give here the rules that cover these errors, and such other hints as may smooth the path of the average writer.

For a complete study of rhetorical principles we refer the student to any of the innumerable standard text-books, of which Professor J. F. Genung's "Working Principles of Rhetoric" is perhaps the most exhaustive, and Professor G. R. Carpenter's "English Composition" and Professor C. S. Baldwin's "Composition, Oral and Written" are the most directly practical. For a most sensible account of English grammar we refer the student to Professor George P. Krapp's "An Elementary English Grammar." For the proof-readers' signs, and for much besides, we are indebted to Theodore L. De Vinne's "The Practice of Typography, Correct Composition."

J. E.
H. E.

WRITTEN ENGLISH

WRITTEN ENGLISH:

A Guide to the Rules of Composition

I

SPELLING

THE principles of English spelling are so complicated and so unrelated to each other, that they are hardly to be considered principles in a scientific sense. It is still desirable that writers should learn to spell by sheer dint of memory. A few rules of thumb, however, are helpful in the correction of ordinary errors.

1. Final *e*, called the silent *e*, is often used after a single consonant to show that a preceding vowel should be pronounced long. In *cane*, the final *e* gives the pronunciation which distinguishes the word from *can*. This rule applies only to words in which the final syllable has the accent. In such words, if there is no final *e*, a single vowel before a final consonant is usually pronounced short.

sin, sine	*mat, mate*
tun, tune	*transfer, interfére*

2. In order to preserve the vowel sound, final *e* is usually retained before suffixes beginning with a consonant; it is dropped, as unnecessary, before suffixes beginning with a vowel.

tune, tuneful, tuning	*lie, lying*
ripe, ripeness	

When the *e* is omitted from *lie*, we have *li-ing*. In all such cases the first *i* is changed to *y*.

3. A single vowel before a double consonant remains short, no matter what suffix is added.

pull, pulling *press, pressing*

4. When a final consonant is preceded by a single vowel, in a final syllable which has the accent, the final consonant is doubled before a suffix beginning with a vowel; otherwise the vowel of the final syllable would be lengthened by the suffix.

run, running *wag, wagged*
sad, sadder, saddest *prefer, preferring*

5. In some languages, notably Italian, *c* and *g* are pronounced soft before *e* or *i;* otherwise they are pronounced hard. Though there is no such rule in English — as *begin* shows — yet there is a tendency in that direction, which often accounts for a silent *e* which indicates no lengthened vowel.

practice *practicable*
notice *noticeable*
privilege *religious*

6. The diphthongs *ie* and *ei* are very troublesome, in all such words as *believe* and *receive.* The best rule of thumb is the old one, — that of the two vowels the one follows the consonant which is nearest to that consonant in the alphabet, counting either way. *I* is nearer to *l* than *e* is; therefore *believe.* *E* is nearer to *c* than *i* is; therefore *receive.* Exceptions are *field, seize, neither, leisure, weird, financier.*

7. Practically all suffixes, like *ness* and *ly,* are added to words without any change in the original spelling. Some writers have a tendency to economize a final consonant, when it is repeated in the suffix.

greenness, not *greeness*
meanness, not *meaness*
beautifully, not *beautifuly*

8. Practically all prefixes, like *mis* or *dis*, are placed before words without any change in the original spelling.

dissatisfaction, not *disatisfaction*
mistake, not *misstake*

9. Final *y*, preceded by a consonant, is changed to *i* before a suffix; in the plural of nouns or the present singular of verbs, it is changed to *ies*.

mercy, merciful	*lady, ladies*
steady, steadied	*hurry, hurries*

There are some exceptions, as *shy, shyness; sly, slyness.*

10. Final *y*, preceded by a vowel, remains unchanged.

play, playing; valley, valleys

11. A few nouns in *o* form their plural by adding *es*.

echoes	*negroes*
cargoes	*tomatoes*
embargoes	*mosquitoes*
potatoes	*heroes*
volcanoes	*buffaloes*

12. Many nouns ending in *f* or *fe* change *f* to *v* before adding the endings *es* or *s* to form their plurals.

wife, wives; knife, knives; loaf, loaves.

13. A few nouns forming their plural irregularly add *en* to the singular.

ox, oxen; brother, brethren (or *brothers*);
child, children.

14. A few nouns form their plural not by adding a termination, but by a change of vowel in the word.

man, men; woman, women; foot, feet;
tooth, teeth; mouse, mice; goose, geese.

Syllabification.

There are several reputable methods of dividing words at the end of a line. When the writer is in doubt about a particular word, he should consult a dictionary — though the dictionaries disagree in syllabification as well as in spelling. The accepted rules of syllabification are:

15. Words are divided between syllables.

abun-dance; depen-dent.

16. Monosyllabic words are never divided.

through, not *throu-gh.*

17. Some words of two syllables, pronounced almost as one, are not divided.

power; heaven; given; soften.

18. The participle endings, *-ed* and *-ing,* may be separated from the rest of the verb. Good printers, however, avoid this division.

19. Unpronounceable divisions are always wrong.

dis-charge, not *disc-harge.*
ex-change, not *exch-ange.*

20. Words may usually be divided after a prefix or before a suffix.

mis-taken; sweet-ness.

21. Where a letter has been doubled, the word may usually be divided.

stop-ping; ac-cident.

22. No division is permissible that ends or begins a line with a syllable of one letter.

emerge, not *e-merge.*
very, not *ver-y.*

Capitals.

23. The first word of a sentence, of a line of poetry, or of a direct quotation, requires a capital letter.

24. Proper nouns and adjectives, or abbreviations of either, begin with a capital letter. This includes names of streets, days, months, holidays, races, sects, political parties, nations, sections of the country, and great historical events; *negro* and *gipsy* are exceptions to this rule.

25. The names of the seasons do not begin with capitals unless they are personified, but it should be noted that there is a growing tendency in favor of always writing these words with capitals.

It was a beautiful *spring* day.
"Come, gentle *Spring!* ethereal Mildness! come."

26. Personified nouns require capitals.

"Fair *Science* frowned not on his humble birth,
And *Melancholy* marked him for her own."

27. The names of the points of the compass when used to specify direction only are not capitalized, but when they designate geographical sections, as the *South*, the *West*, they should begin with a capital. There is a strong tendency, however, as with the names of the seasons, to capitalize all uses of these names.

28. Names and titles of the Deity, and personal pronouns referring to Him, begin with capitals.

29. The pronoun *I* and the interjection *O* are always capitalized.

30. A personal title which immediately precedes the name of a person begins with a capital.

General U. S. Grant. *President* McKinley.

31. When the title of an official follows his name, the first word of that title is not necessarily capitalized.

Elihu Root, *senator from New York.*
Theodore Roosevelt, *ex-president of the United States.*

32. When only the title is used, preceded by *the*, denoting only one person, or when the title is used as the synonym of one person, this title should be capitalized.

He had an interview with the *President.*
How are you, *Colonel?*

33. In compound titles, only the first word need be written with a capital.

Vice-president Sherman.
Chief-justice Fuller.

34. Abbreviated titles of honor or respect which immediately follow a name should have capitals.

George Brown, *Esq.*
Frederick Houghton, *LL. D.*

35. The titles of books, magazines, newspapers, plays, etc., should always begin with a capital letter, and every important word of the title is usually capitalized.

Introduction to the Study of Economics.
Sweet's *Primer of Spoken English.*

36. Recently some writers have adopted the method of using capital letters only for the first word and for proper nouns and adjectives in the title.

Lives of the hunted.
Taylor's *Classical heritage of the Middle Ages.*

37. It should be noted that when the title of a book is given exactly in the text, the definite article *the* at the beginning must be capitalized.

This is a new edition of *The Works of Chaucer.*

38. In citing the name of a newspaper or periodical in the text, however, the article *the* should not have a capital.

This poem was published in the *Century.*

Abbreviations.

39. Care should be taken to avoid the abuse of abbreviations, which is usually considered an indication of carelessness, or lack of training in the writer. It is generally preferable to write out in full a word or phrase, but there are some words or phrases which are customarily abbreviated. A partial list of these is given below, but the more ordinary English abbreviations, like Mr., Mrs., Dr., have been omitted.

A. D. (Latin, *anno domini*), in the year of our Lord.
aet. (Latin, *aetatis*), of age, aged.
a. m. (Latin, *ante meridiem*), before noon.
B. C., before Christ.
cf. (Latin, *confer*), compare.
D. V. (Latin, *deo volente*), God willing.
e. g. (Latin, *exempli gratia*), for example.
etc. (Latin, *et cetera*), and so forth.
ib. or ibid. (Latin, *ibidem*), in the same place; a term used in footnotes to refer to a book or article just mentioned.
i. e. (Latin, *id est*), that is.
inst. (Latin, *instante mense*), the present month.
M. (Latin, *meridies*), noon.
Mgr. (French, *Monseigneur*), an ecclesiastical title.
MS., manuscript.
MSS., manuscripts.
N. B. (Latin, *nota bene*), mark well.
p. m. (Latin, *post meridiem*), after noon.
P. P. C. (French, *pour prendre congé*), to take leave.
pro tem. (Latin, *pro tempore*), for the time being.
prox. (Latin, *proximo mense*), next month.
Q. E. D. (Latin, *quod erat demonstrandum*), which was to be proved.
q. v. (Latin, *quod vide*), which see; that is, refer to that.
ult. (Latin, *ultimo mense*), last month.
vid. (Latin, *vide*), see.
viz. (Latin, *videlicet*), to wit, namely.

40. An abbreviation must always be followed by a period.

41. The double letter shows that the word is in the plural, as *MS.*, *MSS.*

42. The abbreviation *Co.*, as in *The Century Co.*, when it is the company's approved form of imprint and signature, must not be written *Company*.

II

DICTION

THE choice of words depends somewhat upon the circumstances in which they are to be used. In familiar speech our verbal deportment is often careless, and even when we rise to the best manner we are capable of, our spoken word is almost never so dignified nor so accurate as our written speech. And for different occasions of spoken or written speech, we instinctively use a different part of our vocabulary.

43. Good usage is the choice and use of words according to the best authorities — that is, according to the habit of a majority of the best speakers and writers of any language. The readiest way to find out whether a word is in good usage is to look it up in a reputable dictionary, where usage is recorded, not made. The dictionaries are of course not infallible, nor do they always agree, nor are they ever quite up to date; but for practical purposes the average writer can keep his diction in good order by constant reference to *The Century Dictionary*, *The Standard Dictionary*, *Webster's Dictionary*, or — for English as opposed to American usage — *Stormonth's*.

44. Colloquial usage — the use of words or meanings that have a vulgar currency in speech, but are not recognized by the more dignified standards of written composition — is the most frequent departure from good usage and the hardest to correct; for the frequency with which we hear colloquial words and phrases blunts our sense of their vulgarity, and they slip into our speech unnoticed. All expressions which have a local, or provincial, or vulgar, or generally untidy air, may be safely avoided.

45. **Slang** is that kind of colloquial usage which crystallizes into formulas, often imaginative and vigorous, always vulgar. The word or phrase itself may have been or may be in good usage, just as a word once slang may be rescued to better things; but while it is a vulgar formula, an habitual substitute for exact expression, the effect of its monotony is to dull the mind of him who uses and him who hears it. The surface objection to slang is the vulgarity it suggests. The deeper objection is that the speaker is too lazy or too stupid to find the exact word for his idea; therefore he uses a formula — which is a substitute for thought. When a boy says of a girl, "She's a peach," he is using a perfectly good word; and if we had not heard the formula before, we should think it original and striking, if a bit cannibalistic. But when we know that the same word may be diverted to the praise of a cigar or a hair cut, we understand that the boy has expressed himself, more than he has expressed his thought.

General Offences against Good Usage.

46. A **Barbarism** is the use of an expression which is foreign to a language. Some authorities use the term only of errors in inflection, as *hisn* or *hern* for *his* or *hers*. In a wider sense, any mixture of foreign words or phrases is a barbarism; the common habit of injecting into conversation French words, such as *ménage*, *éclat*, is to be regarded as a barbarism.

47. An **Impropriety** is the use of a proper word in an incorrect sense. Among the most frequent improprieties are:

lay, for *lie* (see ¶ 320).
exceptionable, for *exceptional* (see ¶ 300).
apt, for *likely* or *liable* (see ¶ 321).

48. A **Solecism** is the use of a proper expression in an incorrect grammatical construction.

I done it, for *I did it.*
He spoke to you and she, for *He spoke to you and her* (see ¶ 359).

Special Questions of Good Usage.

49. Trite expressions should be avoided. If the reader or hearer can anticipate your words, you cannot hold his attention. Therefore, avoid all phrases that have become formulas, such as:

the surrounding country.
last but not least.
along these lines.
method in his madness.
doomed to disappointment.

Although trite expressions are not necessarily **vulgar**, they are open, like slang, to the objection that the use of formulas stultifies the brain.

50. The pronoun *they* should not be used indefinitely. The English idiom for general statements is *you;* some people consider it a special sign of refinement to use *one,* following the French idiom. Either expression is correct.

"Than are dreamt of in *your* philosophy."

You never see that kind of man in these days.
One never sees that kind of man in these days.

51. Of those who prefer to use *one,* some writers make a point of repeating the word, instead of referring to it by *he* or *she;* their theory is that *one* should not seem to indicate gender. They would say:

One can always succeed, if *one* **(not *he*)** tries hard enough.

Figures of Speech.

Only two figures of speech are in common use, *Simile* and *Metaphor*.

52. Simile. That figure by which one thing is said to be like another.

"Thou art as long, and lank, and brown
As is the ribbed sea-sand."
"Every soul it passed me by
Like the whizz of my cross-bow."

53. Metaphor. That figure by which one thing is identified with another.

"Our birth *is but a sleep and a forgetting:*
The Soul that *rises in us, our life's Star,*
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar."

54. In some uses of metaphor the identification is not stated, but assumed, and the consequences of the identification are expressed.

"I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer *had gusht,*
A wicked whisper came, and *made*
My heart as dry as dust."

In this example the assumed metaphor is that the Mariner's heart is a channel, through which prayers flow.

55. Mixed Metaphor, as the term implies, is an incongruous mixture of images. The great masters have sometimes given us unforgetable mixed metaphors, like Shakspere's "To take arms against a sea of troubles"; but the effect of mixed metaphor is usually ludicrous, and it should be carefully avoided.

III

GRAMMATICAL TERMS

56. Accusative with the infinitive. After verbs of wishing, believing, and the like, the infinitive may be used with a subject in the objective (accusative) case.

I wished *him to be* my friend.

57. Adjective. A word which limits or modifies a noun or pronoun.

"*Small* service is *true* service while it lasts."

58. Adjective clause. A clause used as an adjective to modify a noun or pronoun.

"Those deep dark eyes *where pride demurs.*"

59. Adverb. A word which limits or modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb.

A *very* good man.

60. Adverbial clause. A clause used as an adverb to modify a verb, an adjective, or an adverb.

"Poor, who had plenty once,
When gifts fell thick as rain."

61. Apposition. When a noun or its equivalent is placed next to another noun in order to explain it, the two nouns are said to be in apposition.

"Sweetest Shakespeare, *Fancy's child.*"

62. Article. A kind of limiting adjective. *The* is called the definite article; *a* or *an*, the indefinite article.

63. Auxiliary verbs. *Be, have, do, shall, will, may, can, must,* and *ought,* with their inflectional forms, when used with the infinitives and participles of other verbs, are called auxiliary verbs.

"In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds *are* brightening
Thou *dost* float and run."

64. Case. The inflectional form of a noun or pronoun. There are three cases, *nominative, possessive,* and *objective.* The subject of a verb or the predicate of the verb *to be* is put in the *nominative case.* The object of a verb, the object of a preposition, or the subject of an infinitive is put in the *objective case.* A noun or pronoun denoting possession is put in the *possessive case.*

Nominative: *He* spoke to me.
Objective: I saw *him.*
I spoke to *him.*
Possessive: I did not like *his* words.

65. The possessive case, singular, of nouns is formed by adding *'s* to the nominative singular.

Girl, girl's.

66. The possessive plural is formed by adding *'s* to the nominative plural, when the nominative plural does not end in *s.*

Children, children's.

67. If the nominative plural ends in *s,* the possessive is formed by adding only the apostrophe.

Horses, horses'.

68. Nouns ending in *s* or with an *s* sound, as *Hughes, conscience,* may form their possessive singular in the regular way by adding *'s,* or they omit the *s* and retain the apostrophe to indicate that this is the possessive case. Usage

differs greatly on this point, but the best writers seem to agree on the following: —

69. Nouns of one syllable ending in *s*, and nouns of two or more syllables, ending in *s*, accented on the last syllable, form their possessive singular in the usual way, by adding *'s*.

Keats's poems, *Jones's* book, the *defense's* argument.

70. Nouns of two or more syllables, not accented on the last, may either form their possessive singular in the usual way, by adding *'s*, or may omit any special ending, except an apostrophe to indicate the possessive case.

Dickens's novels, or *Dickens'* novels.
For *conscience's* sake, or for *conscience'* sake.

71. In compound nouns, in groups of words, or when a title is added to another noun, only the last noun is given the sign (*'s*) of the possessive case.

His *son-in-law's* house.
The Czar of Russia's palace.
Mr. Brown, the lawyer's, horse.

72. Clause. A group of words forming part of a sentence, and containing a subject and a predicate. When a clause taken by itself makes a complete statement, it is called an *independent clause.*

If I were you, *I should stay.*

73. When a clause depends for its complete sense on some other clause, it is called a *dependent* or *subordinate clause.*

If I were you, I should stay.

74. When two or more independent clauses are in the same sentence, they are said to be *co-ordinate clauses.*

I wished to stay, but *I had another engagement.*

75. Comparison. When an adjective, or an adverb, simply attributes a quality or manner, it is in the *positive degree.* When an adjective or an adverb attributes a quality or manner with reference to some standard, it is in the *comparative degree.* When an adjective or an adverb attributes a quality in the highest degree, it is in the *superlative degree.* See *Inflection.*

Positive: The *early* bird catches the worm.
Comparative: The *later* worms fare better.
Superlative: Whether you should get up *first* or *last* depends upon your biological status in society.

76. Complex sentence. One which contains a subordinate clause. (See example, ¶ 73.)

"*If Winter comes,* can Spring be far behind?"

77. Compound sentence. One which contains two or more independent clauses, with no subordinate clause.

"*Noon descends,* and *after noon*
Autumn's evening meets me soon."

78. Conjunction. A word which connects words, phrases, clauses, or sentences.

"He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn;
A sadder *and* a wiser man."

79. Co-ordinate. Words, phrases, and clauses in the same construction in any sentence are co-ordinate.

80. Copula. A verb which expresses relation between the subject and the predicate, usually the verb *to be* or any of its forms.

"The World *is* too much with us."

81. Correlative conjunctions. Certain conjunctions used in pairs to connect correlated words, phrases, or clauses.

not only . . . but also	*either . . . or*
both . . . and	*neither . . . nor*
whether . . . or	

82. Both conjunctions in any pair must be followed by the same part of speech.

I spoke to *both* Smith *and* Jones (not, *both* to Smith *and* Jones).

83. Demonstrative adjectives. *This, these, that, those.*

Give me *that* book.

The same words used as pronouns are called *demonstrative pronouns.*

Don't say *that* again.

84. Gender. Distinction according to sex. There are three genders, *masculine, feminine,* and *neuter.*

85. Nouns or pronouns naming or denoting male beings are of the *masculine* gender.

Man, boy, butler, father, he, his.

86. Nouns or pronouns naming or denoting female beings are of the *feminine* gender.

Woman, mother, hostess, nun, her, hers.

87. Nouns or pronouns naming or denoting objects or ideas without sex are of the *neuter* gender.

Town, day, table, book, it, its.

88. Nouns which may be either masculine or feminine are sometimes considered of *common* gender.

Friend, doctor, companion, child.

89. English nouns are not inflected to show gender, but a pronoun must be of the same gender as the noun for which it stands or to which it refers.

90. Gerund. A verb-form in *ing* having some of the quality of an infinitive, and like an infinitive, treated as a verbal noun.

Good for *eating.*

91. Indefinite pronouns. The most important of these are *all, another, any, anybody, anything, aught, both, each, either, everybody, everything, few, many, most, naught, neither, nobody, none, nothing, one, other, some, somebody, something, somewhat, such.*

92. Infinitive. That form of the verb which expresses action or state without regard to person or number. It is commonly preceded by the preposition *to*, which in this use is called the *Sign of the Infinitive.* This is omitted after auxiliary verbs, and is used optionally after certain verbs like *dare, help, need, please,* and *go.* The gerund (¶ 90) is sometimes regarded as an infinitive.

I shall *go.*
I wish *to go.*
I need *to go;* you need not *go.*

93. When a modifying adverb is inserted between the Infinitive Sign and the rest of the infinitive, the resulting phrase is called a *Split Infinitive.* Conservative authorities object to this usage.

To answer immediately (not *to immediately answer*) is impossible.

94. Inflection. The change in the form of a word to show a difference in its meaning. The inflection of nouns and pronouns is called *declension;* the inflection of adjectives and adverbs, *comparison;* the inflection of verbs, *conjugation.*

95. Interjection. A word thrown in to express emotion; an exclamation.

Hark! now I hear them.
Ding, dong, bell.

96. Interrogative pronouns. Those pronouns, like *who, which, what,* when used to ask a question, are *interrogative pronouns.*

97. Mood. The way in which a verb makes an assertion. The *indicative mood* makes the assertion as a fact; the *subjunctive mood* makes the assertion conditionally; and the *imperative mood* expresses a command or entreaty.

Indicative: I *came* yesterday.
Subjunctive: If I *were* there, I should help you.
Imperative; *Go* at once.

98. In careless speech the subjunctive is not distinguished from the indicative. Some scholarly writers even claim that it is pedantic to use the subjunctive at all. But it expresses what cannot be expressed in another way. Its chief use is in the expression of present condition contrary to fact.

If Brown *were* there, he would etc., but he is not there.

The indicative in such a place would give another meaning.

If Brown *was* there, he must have etc.

Here the question is raised whether Brown was there, with no implication as to whether he was or not.

99. Nominative absolute. When a noun or pronoun in the nominative case is followed by a participle in agreement with it, and is the subject of no other verb, the construction is called the *nominative absolute.*

The doctor being out, the servant went in search of other assistance.

100. Noun. The name of a person, place, or thing. A *proper noun* is a name of an individual person, place, or thing, as distinguished from others of the same class.

George Washington, Boston, England.

101. A *common noun* is the name of any one of a class.

Horse, wagon.

102. A *collective noun* is the name of a class or group.

The poor, the rich.

103. Number. That inflectional form of nouns, and pronouns, and verbs which indicates whether one person or thing is designated, or more than one.

Singular:	*He runs.*	*House.*
Plural:	*They run.*	*Houses.*

For irregular formation of plural of nouns, see ¶ 11-14.

104. Object. The noun, pronoun, or phrase denoting the object directly affected by the action of the verb is called the *direct object.*

I saw *him.*

105. The noun, pronoun, or phrase denoting an object less affected by the action of the verb than the direct object, is called the *indirect object.* The indirect object is often indicated by *to* or *for.*

You gave *me* this book.
I will return it *to you.*

106. Part of speech. One of the eight classes into which words are divided: noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb, conjunction, preposition, and interjection.

107. Participle. The verb-form in *ing* or *ed* when used as an adjective. These two forms are called respectively the *present* and *past participle.*

Laughing in spite of himself, he replied.
At that minute he had *entered* the room.

108. Personal pronouns. When a speaker or writer speaks of himself, he uses the pronouns of the *first person.*

	SINGULAR.	PLURAL.
Nominative:	*I*	*we*
Possessive:	*my, mine*	*our, ours*
Objective:	*me*	*us*

109. When the speaker addresses another person directly, he uses the pronouns of the *second person.*

SINGULAR.	PLURAL.
Nominative: *you, thou*	*you, ye*
Possessive: *your, yours, thy, thine*	*your, yours*
Objective: *you, thee*	*you, ye.*

Thou, ye, thy, thine, and *thee* are poetical forms.

110. When the speaker refers to a person or thing not directly addressed, he uses the pronouns of the *third person.*

SINGULAR.	PLURAL.
Nominative: *he, she, it*	*they*
Possessive: *his, her, hers, its*	*their, theirs*
Objective: *him, her, it*	*them*

111. Phrase. A group of words which are part of a sentence, but which do not contain a subject or a predicate.

112. A verb formed with the help of one or more auxiliaries is called a *verb-phrase.*

I *was going.*

113. A phrase used as a preposition is called a *preposition phrase.*

In consideration of your injuries, willingness, etc.

114. A phrase consisting of a preposition and its object is called a *prepositional phrase.*

I fell *on my knees.*

115. A phrase used as a noun, adjective, or adverb is known as a *noun phrase, adjective phrase,* or *adverb phrase.*

The very thought is pleasant.
The hat *on the table* is mine.
I struck *with all my might.*

116. Predicate. What is said of the subject. A *simple predicate* is the verb; a *complete predicate* is the verb with its dependent words.

Simple predicate: I *told* him the news.
Complete predicate: I *told him the news.*

117. Preposition. A word placed before a noun or pronoun to show its relation to other words in the sentence. The noun or pronoun before which a preposition is placed is called its *object.*

Explain this *to me.*

118. Principal parts of a verb are the infinitive, first person singular of the preterite, and the past participle.

Run, ran, run.
Walk, walked, walked.

119. Pronoun is a word which stands for a noun.

I met Smith and told *him.*

120. Relative. Referring or relating to a preceding word.

121. The relatives *which, what, whichever, whatever,* when they have the force of adjectives are called *relative adjectives.*

122. When a relative has the force of an adverb, it is called a *relative adverb.* The most important are: *after, as, before, how, since, till, until, when, whenever, whence, where, wherever, while, whither,* and *why.*

123. The words *that, who, what, which, whoever, whatever, whichever* are *relative pronouns* when they join a dependent clause to a main clause by referring to a noun or pronoun in the main clause. The word referred to is called the *antecedent.*

She asked her *sister, who* could not tell her.

124. Sentence. A group of words expressing one complete idea. When a sentence contains one subject and one predicate, it is called a *simple sentence.* See also under *Compound sentence* (¶ 77), and *Complex sentence* (¶ 76).

125. Subject. The person, place, or thing of which the predicate is expressed.

He came to the door.

126. Tense. Forms of the verb which indicate the time of the action.

Present tense. I laugh.
Past tense. I laughed.
Future tense. I shall laugh.
Present perfect. I have laughed.
Past perfect. I had laughed.
Future perfect. I shall have laughed.

127. Transitive. A verb which can take a direct object is called a *transitive verb;* a verb which cannot take a direct object is called an *intransitive verb.*

Transitive: I *drew* a long breath.
Intransitive: I *breathed* with difficulty.

128. Verb. A word used to express action or state of being.

I *am* tired.
I *ran* all the way.

129. Voice. That form of the verb which shows whether the subject acts or is acted upon. A verb is in the *active voice* when it represents its subject as acting, and in the *passive voice* when the subject is acted upon.

Active: I *have answered* you.
Passive: *Are you answered?*

IV

THE SENTENCE

Matters of Punctuation.

Many of the common faults in sentence structure are faults of punctuation. For the rules of punctuation, see p. 32.

130. Some writers, for special purposes, punctuate subordinate clauses as though they were sentences.

> I took him for a clever person. *Which he most certainly was not.*

The average writer, however, will have no excuse for such a practice, and it is to be carefully avoided.

131. Some adverbs, like *then, so, also,* are frequently misused as conjunctions in compound sentences. In such cases insert the conjunction before the adverb, or separate the clauses by a semicolon.

> Wrong: I put on my clothes as quickly as possible, *then* I followed him out of the door.
>
> Right: I put on my clothes as quickly as possible, *and then* I followed him out of the door.
>
> Or: I put on my clothes as quickly as possible; *then* I followed him out of the door.

132. A relative pronoun can be preceded by a conjunction, as in *and which* or *but which,* only when the relative pronoun has already been expressed.

> Wrong: Mr. Roberts, the president of the company, *and who* is my best friend.
>
> Right: Mr. Roberts, *who* is the president of the company, and *who* is my best friend.
>
> Or: Mr. Roberts, my best friend, *who* is the president of the company.

The Arrangement of the Thought.

A writer is sometimes doubtful whether to punctuate two related statements as separate sentences, or to co-ordinate them in a compound sentence (see ¶ 77).

133. If two or more independent clauses complement each other, so that together they state one complete idea, they should be co-ordinated in a compound sentence.

Wrong: I spoke to him. But he would not answer.
Right: I spoke to him, but he would not answer.

134. If one clause in a compound sentence expresses a thought logically subordinate to the thought of the rest of the sentence, the sentence should be made complex (see ¶ 76), so that the subordinate thought will be in a subordinate clause.

Wrong: To please his father he studied law, and he did not wish to practise that profession.
Right: To please his father he studied law, although he did not, etc.

135. In complex sentences the most important statement should be in the principal clause; the secondary, qualifying statements should be in the subordinate clause or clauses.

Wrong: She lingered all the winter; when she died, the spring came.
Right: She lingered all the winter; when the spring came, she died.

136. In a **periodic sentence** the idea is not completely expressed until the period is reached. The purpose of this kind of sentence is to hold the reader's attention. Periodic sentences are either simple or complex.

In spite of his long experience, in spite of warnings innumerable, he chose the only course that was sure to make him miserable.

137. In a **loose sentence** the idea might be considered complete at one or more points before the period is reached. The purpose of this kind of sentence is to give the ordinary unpremeditated sequence of conversation. Loose sentences are either simple or compound.

I joined them at the ferry, and we went to the dock, but the steamer had not arrived.

138. When **emphasis** is desired at the end of a sentence, the final word should be important in meaning, and should preferably end in an accented syllable.

"But of Andromachus, the founder of the well built and fairly adorned Greek city that then rose, we hear no more — a hero, I think, one of the true breed of the founders of states."

139. A sentence ending in an unaccented word, as a pronoun or a preposition, will have a comparatively weak effect, though not necessarily an undesirable effect.

"She attended Laura with a watchfulness of affection which never left her."

140. The rule, often prescribed, that no sentence should end in a preposition, is a pedantic exaggeration of the normal preference for strong endings.

"The madness wherein now he raves,
And all we wail for."
"And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of."

141. A participle at the beginning of a sentence, unless it is in the nominative absolute construction (see ¶ 99), agrees with the subject of the sentence.

Filled with enthusiasm, the crowd cheered.

142. If the writer does not intend that the participle shall agree with the subject, he should recast the sen-

tence; otherwise he will perpetrate an absurdity known as the **dangling participle.**

Wrong: Turning the corner, a house stood opposite me.
Right: Turning the corner, I saw a house opposite.

Matters of Grammar.

143. A **relative pronoun** is parsed with the verb of the relative clause. If it is the subject of that verb, it must be in the nominative case; if it is the object, it must be in the objective case. The case of the relative pronoun is not affected by the verb of the principal clause, nor by the verb of any parenthetical clause.

You *who* (not *whom*) I thought were true.
Tell it to *whoever* (not *whomever*) seems interested.

In this latter example the preposition *to* governs, not the relative pronoun, but the antecedent *him* understood.

144. In **the accusative with the infinitive** construction (see ¶ 56), a noun or pronoun following the infinitive is, like the subject of the infinitive, in the objective case.

They proved *him* to be a *rascal.*
She imagined *her* to be *me.*

145. The **present participle** expresses action or being contemporary with the action or being of the principal verb.

Shaking him by the hand, { I say, etc. / I shall say, etc. / I said, etc.

146. The **past participle** expresses action or being earlier in time than the action or being of the principal verb.

Having finished my work, { I went out. / I go out. / I shall go out.

147. The **present infinitive** expresses action or being contemporary with the action or being of the verb on which it depends.

I intended *to write* (not *to have written*) you.

148. The **past infinitive** expresses action or being earlier in time than the action or being of the verb on which it depends.

I am sorry *to have missed* you.

149. The past infinitive also expresses action or being completed before some time denoted otherwise than by the tense of the principal verb.

I hope *to have finished* this before he comes.

150. Verbs like *to seem, to look, to feel, to sound,* when used as copulas (see ¶ 80), are not modified by adverbs. They are followed by adjectives, which attribute some quality to the subject of the verb.

You look *well* or *lovely* (not *splendidly* or *handsomely*).
The picture *seems* pretty.
The organ sounds *magnificent* (not *magnificently*).

The misuse of adverbs in this construction leads to much unconscious humor in the average person's conversation. If you say that you "feel badly," your words mean that your sense of touch is out of order. If you say that your friend "looks nicely," your words mean that she uses her eyes with fastidious discrimination (see ¶ 281).

151. When the **present participle** is used as a noun (see *gerund* ¶ 90) the noun or pronoun governing it is in the possessive case.

I was pleased by *their* (not *them*) coming.
I told him of *John's* (not *John*) seeing you.

152. Demonstrative pronouns, and other words of reference, should refer to some antecedent definitely expressed, not to a general idea.

Wrong: He wasted his afternoon in the Park. *That* is something I detest.

Right: I detest such waste of time; or, I detest that way of spending an afternoon; or, I detest the Park.

153. The same **pronoun** should not be repeated to refer to different nouns. Either the nouns themselves should be used, or one noun should be put in a different number from the others.

Wrong: When an Englishman meets an American, *he* notices first the points in which *he* differs from *him*.

Correct but awkward: When an Englishman meets an American, the *Englishman* notices first the points in which he differs from the *American*.

Preferable: When an Englishman meets Americans, he notices first the points in which *he* differs from *them*.

154. In general, avoid the **passive voice,** unless you cannot say what you mean in the active voice.

Undesirable: The handsomest building *seen by me* in that city.

Preferable: The handsomest building *I saw* in that city.

V

PUNCTUATION

155. The Period is used: —

(a) To mark the end of a completed sentence.

(b) After an abbreviation, as Mr., Dr., St.

156. The Comma is the sign of separation; it marks a gap, or division of grammatical structure. It is used chiefly: —

157. Before conjunctions between the clauses of compound sentences.

My place is very small, but there are many trees and thickets.

The crickets have come, and are cheerful enough in their monotonous way.

158. It is the mistaken practice of some writers never to put a comma before *and*. When that conjunction connects anything less important than a clause, the comma may be omitted; but between clauses *and* must be preceded by a comma.

159. The comma is used also between the clauses of complex sentences.

I will send you the book we talked of, if you have not a copy already.

160. In very short complex sentences the comma is usually omitted, especially if the dependent clause follow the main clause.

I will come if I can.

161. The comma is used also between a long subject and its verb.

The winding lanes that break up the island into indescribable geometric figures, are its chief charm.

162. Before and after words or phrases in apposition.

Ralph Jones, the youngest scholar, was the cleverest.

163. Before and after all words used parenthetically, or words of address.

His attempts, therefore, were not successful.
Robert, will you go?

164. To show that a word is omitted.

Admission, ten cents (Admission is ten cents).
A bright, clear day (A bright and clear day).

✓ **165.** Between words and phrases in a series, even when a conjunction is not omitted.

Tom, Dick, and Harry.
He studied Latin, Greek, English, and Composition.

It would be logical to omit the comma before *and* in these examples, but most writers feel it necessary to show that the last two terms in a series are not to be considered a unit.

166. Before and after participial phrases.

Entering the room, I spoke to them.

167. Instead of the exclamation point.

Alas, I cannot.

168. To prevent mistaken combinations of words in a sentence.

Years after, I met him.
Over the window, curtains were hung.

Although the comma gives clearness on the page, the possibility of a double meaning remains when such sentences are read aloud. Every sentence of this kind should be remodeled.

169. Before short direct quotations.

He said, "Your meaning is clear."

170. Before a non-restrictive relative clause. Relative clauses are roughly divided into *restrictive* and *non-*

restrictive relative clauses. A *non-restrictive clause* merely describes or gives information about its antecedent.

Mr. Brown, *who was late,* had to stand up.

171. A *restrictive relative clause* limits and narrows the meaning of its antecedent.

The person *who told me* is an authority.

172. A non-restrictive clause can usually be omitted without affecting the thought of the main clause, but a restrictive clause can not generally be omitted without changing its antecedent.

173. No comma is used before a restrictive relative clause.

174. The Semicolon is in effect a conjunction; it marks not a separation but an addition. It is used chiefly:—

175. To join clauses of a compound sentence where there is no other conjunction.

He watched the child without a word; none of us doubted what he might have said, had he chosen.

176. To join clauses of a compound sentence where the ordinary conjunction has been used between words or phrases, and thereby the clause division has become ambiguous.

Instead of following his thoughts, I listened to the sound of his voice, to its music, its variety, and its amplitude; and I understood at last the secret of his charm.

177. The Colon is the mark of anticipation. It introduces long quotations and passages, and is practically equivalent to *as follows:*

Daniel Webster rose in his place, and said: (quotation following).

"He had only one rule of warfare: to strike harder than the enemy and to strike first."

Ladies and Gentlemen:

178. The Dash is the sign of explanation. It marks the insertion of a word or group of words more important than the rest of the sentence. In this respect it differs from

179. The Parenthesis, which marks a word or group of words less important than the rest of the sentence. In oral reading, the voice is raised for emphasis on the words preceded by a dash; it is lowered on the words included in parenthesis.

180. Brackets are generally used only to enclose explanations or corrections, inserted by the author or editor into the statement of some one else.

The Hyphen is used as follows:—

181. To join compound words.

Ex-president, twenty-five.

182. To mark the separation of a word at the end of a line.

183. To separate two vowels which are not pronounced together. The diaeresis is frequently used for the same purpose.

Co-ordinate or *coördinate.*

184. The Question Mark and the **Exclamation Mark** indicate inflection of the voice rather than a break or connection in grammatical structure. They may take the place of the period at the end of the sentence, but they may also stand anywhere in the sentence, to indicate the vocal inflection of the preceding word or phrase.

A half-crown, think ye? a half-crown?
My dear Colonel, how hot we are! how angry you Indian gentlemen become!

185. Quotation Marks are used to separate a quotation from the rest of the text. If a quotation includes another quotation, the inner quotation is set off by single quotation marks.

"I told him not to do it," explained the Captain. "'You'll be sorry as long as you live,' I said to him."

186. If the quotation includes several continuous sentences all in the same paragraph, it is set off at the beginning of the first and at the end of the last sentence.

187. If the quotation includes several paragraphs, it is set off at the beginning of all the paragraphs, and at the end of the last paragraph.

188. Double quotation marks are used to indicate the titles of books, plays, magazines, etc. These marks are not used, however, if the titles are written in italics.

The Apostrophe is used as follows:—

189. To form the possessive case, singular and plural.

Boy's, boys'.

190. To mark the omission of a letter or letters.

Don't, I'll, 'tis, 'way.

191. To make a plural for letters and figures.

Cross your *t's* and dot your *i's*.
Your 8's and 3's are not distinct.

192. Italics. A special kind of type used in printing. Ordinary type is called "roman." One line drawn underneath a written word is understood to be the equivalent of italics. Italics are used for:—

193. Words to be especially emphasized.

194. Words from a foreign language which have not been incorporated into the English language.

195. Sometimes for the names of books, newspapers, plays, etc., in place of quotation marks.

VI

THE PARAGRAPH

196. All paragraphs must begin on a new line, and must be indented about half an inch to the right of the margin.

197. As a sentence expresses one *idea*, so a paragraph expresses and develops one *topic*. All ideas directly pertaining to one topic should be included in the same paragraph.

198. A careful writer thinks out the topics of his subject in advance, and often notes them down for his own guidance. With the various steps of his thought thus clearly in mind, he will find it easy to state in a single sentence the topic of each paragraph as he comes to it. This sentence, which states the topic, usually near the beginning of the paragraph, is called the **topic sentence,** and in correct writing the topic sentences, taken by themselves, give an adequate outline of the whole composition. The other sentences simply develop the topic of the paragraph to which they belong.

199. The topic is sometimes stated near the end of the paragraph. In that case the topic sentence is called a **summary sentence.** Paragraphs in which the topic is so stated have the effect of a periodic climax, and are analogous to periodic sentences.

200. Topic sentences and summary sentences are used in all careful expository writing, less frequently in narratives and descriptions. In description the details usually follow each other in order of space; in narration, in order of time.

201. Short articles, editorials or reviews, may be written in only one paragraph, but if the subject is extensive, each phase of it must be developed in a separate paragraph.

202. Paragraphs, like sentences, must be connected, either by conjunctions or by some words of reference, or by some phrases expressing a transition. The connectives between paragraphs should be more elaborate than those between sentences; for that reason ordinary conjunctions, *and, so, but,* are inadequate between paragraphs.

203. Paragraphs can sometimes be connected by the repetition of an idea, or of a phrase, when the first sentence of the second paragraph echoes a sentence near the end of the preceding paragraph.

204. The connection is more frequently made by the use of such words and phrases as: —

> ***however, moreover, therefore, yet, notwithstanding, in the meanwhile, on the one hand, on the other hand.***

205. A **transition paragraph,** consisting of very few sentences — often only one sentence — may be used to connect two larger paragraphs whose topics do not form a natural sequence. The *transition paragraph* is found most frequently in stories.

206. In narratives it is customary to write each speech, however short, as a separate paragraph.

In the following paragraphs the topic sentences are printed in italics; the connecting words, in heavy type.

"I purpose to write the history of England from the accession of King James the Second down to a time which is within the memory of men still living. I shall recount the errors which, in a few months, alienated a loyal gentry and priesthood from the House of Stuart. I shall trace the course of that revolution which terminated the long struggle between

our sovereigns and their parliaments, and bound up together the rights of the people and the title of the reigning dynasty. I shall relate how the new settlement was, during many troubled years, successfully defended against foreign and domestic enemies; how, under that settlement, the authority of law and the security of property were found to be compatible with a liberty of discussion and of individual action never before known; how, from the auspicious union of order and freedom, sprang a prosperity of which the annals of human affairs had furnished no example; how our country, from a state of ignominious vassalage, rapidly rose to the place of empire among European powers; how her opulence and her martial glory grew together; how, by wise and resolute good faith, was gradually established a public credit fruitful of marvels which to the statesmen of any former age would have seemed incredible; how a gigantic commerce gave birth to a maritime power, compared with which every other maritime power, ancient or modern, sinks into insignificance; how Scotland, after ages of enmity, was at length united to England, not merely by legal bonds, but by indissoluble ties of interest and affection; how, in America, the British colonies rapidly became far mightier and wealthier than the realms which Cortes and Pizarro had added to the dominions of Charles the Fifth; how in Asia, British adventurers founded an empire not less splendid and more durable than that of Alexander.

"**Nor** *will it be* **less** *my duty faithfully to record disasters mingled with triumphs, and great national crimes and follies far more humiliating than any disaster.* It will be seen that even what we justly account our chief blessings were not without alloy. It will be seen that the system which effectually secured our liberties against the encroachments of kingly power gave birth to a new class of abuses from which absolute monarchies are exempt. It will be seen that, in consequence partly of unwise interference, and partly of unwise neglect, the increase of wealth and the extension of trade produced, together with immense good, some evils from which poor and rude societies are free. It will be seen how, in two important dependencies of the crown, wrong was followed by just retribution; how imprudence and obstinacy broke the ties which bound the North American colonies to the parent state; how Ireland, cursed by the domination of race over race, and of religion over religion, remained indeed a member of the empire, but a withered and distorted member, adding no strength to

the body politic, and reproachfully pointed at by all who feared or envied the greatness of England.

"**Yet** *unless I greatly deceive myself, the general effect of* **this** *chequered narrative will be to excite thankfulness in all religious minds, and hope in the breasts of all patriots.* For the history of our country during the last hundred and sixty years is eminently the history of physical, of moral, and of intellectual improvement. Those who compare the age on which their lot has fallen with a golden age which exists only in their imagination may talk of degeneracy and decay: but no man who is correctly informed as to the past will be disposed to take a morose or desponding view of the present."

— MACAULAY'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND, Chap. I.

VII

ARRANGEMENT AND CORRECTION OF MANUSCRIPT

207. The final copy of any literary composition, whether intended for publication or for the class room, should be written in ink on only one side of the page.

208. Manuscript intended for publication should be typewritten.

209. The most convenient size of paper is the page ordinarily used for college themes and for typewriting purposes, about eight by ten inches.

210. A margin of at least one inch should be left at the right as well as the left side of the page, and the pages should be numbered.

211. The following signs are used as directions to the printer for correcting errors in manuscript or proof:—

No ¶	No new paragraph.
Run in	Let there be no break in the reading.
¶	Make a new paragraph.
V V V	Correct uneven spacing of words.
8	Strike out the marked type, word, or sentence.
9	Reverse this type.
#	More space where caret ^ is marked.

Contract the spacing.

Take out all spacing.

Move this to the left.

Move this to the right.

Raise this line or letter.

Depress this line or letter.

Make parallel at the side with other lines.

Indent line an em.

Push down a space that blackens the proof.

Change this bruised type.

Change this faulty type of a wrong font.

Transpose words or letters underlined.

Put in lower case, or small letters.

Put in small capitals.

Put in capitals.

Insert apostrophe. Superior characters are put over an inverted caret, as etc.; for inferior characters the caret is put in its usual position, as in .

Change from italic to roman.

Change from roman to italic.

Insert period.

 Insert comma.

Insert semicolon.

Insert colon.

Insert hyphen.

 One-em dash.

 Two-em dash.

Take out cancelled character and close up.

Is this right? See to it.

^ Insert letter or word marked in margin.

//// Hair-space letters as marked.

Stet Restore crossed out word or letter.

.... Dots put below the crossed word mean: Cancel the correction first made, and let the types stand as they were.

⁀ Over two or three letters. Change for the diphthong or for a logotype, as *æ*, *ffi*.

≡ Straighten lines.

//// Diagonal lines crossing the text indicate that the composition is out of square.

Out, see copy Here is an omission; see copy.

The following underscorings are used by editors as directions for italic, small capitals, and capitals.

——— italic. ≡≡≡ capitals.

≡≡≡ small capitals. ≡≡≡ italic capitals.

212. In the criticism of college themes the following signs are often used to indicate necessary changes: —

=? — Means what?
? — Query as to fact.
Sp. — Bad spelling.
p. — Punctuation wrong.
H. — High flown or inflated.
V. — Vague.
K. — Awkward, ugly.
E. — Deficient in emphasis.
C. — Lacking in coherence.
Con. — Faulty construction.
S. — Faulty sentence structure.
U. — Lacking in unity.
S. U. — Sentence lacks unity.
¶ U. — Paragraph lacks unity.
R. — Avoid repetition.
¶ — Begin new paragraph.
No ¶ — No new paragraph.
W. — Wordy.
MS. — Bad manuscript.

VIII

LETTERS

Business and Friendly.

213. The **Heading** contains the writer's address and the date.

214. In business letters the address should be written above the date, and the entire heading should be placed at the beginning of the letter, near the top of the right side of the first page.

215. When the address is given in the heading of any letter, it should not be repeated at the close.

216. In writing an address, either in a letter or on an envelope, do not put *No.* or ♯ before the number of the house.

217. The British always put a comma after the number of the house, as *23, Fifth Avenue.* This is proper, but it is not the American usage.

218. In less formal or friendly letters, the heading may be placed as in business letters, or it is permissible to write the address and date at the end, below the signature and at the left. The address is sometimes written at the top of the first page and in the centre, and the date is written below the signature, at the left side. In either case when the date is placed at the end, the day of the month is often written out in full.

219. When the day of the month is written in numerals, place a comma after the numerals, and do not use *st, nd, rd, d,* or *th.*

220. In business letters, the date is frequently written entirely in numbers, as, 7/16/'10, but this is not considered the best usage even in business letters, and is never permissible in friendly letters or notes.

221. The Salutation appropriate in business letters is any one of the following:

Dear Sir	*My dear Sir*
Dear Madam	*My dear Madam*
Dear Sirs	*Gentlemen*

222. *Madam* is used to address either married or unmarried women.

223. The abbreviation *Messrs.* should never be used as a salutation.

224. In friendly letters the following salutations are proper: —

Dear Mr. Adams	*My dear Mrs. Wells*
Dear Miss Harrison	*My dear Mr. Brown*

225. All salutations preceded by *My* are more formal than those without the pronoun. *My dear Sir* is more formal than *Dear Sir,* and *My dear Mrs. Fitch* than *Dear Mrs. Fitch.* When the salutation begins with *My,* the word *dear* should not be written with a capital.

226. The salutation may be followed by a comma, by a comma and a dash, by a colon, or by a colon and a dash. The least formal is the comma; and the colon, with or without the dash, is generally used in business letters, especially after *Gentlemen.*

227. In business letters, the name and address of the recipient are usually inserted before the salutation, as, —

Mr. Henry Price,
546 Fifth Avenue,
New York City.
My dear Sir: —

In these addresses within the letter, a period is placed at the end of the last line, and a comma at the end of each preceding line.

228. If the letter is addressed to a man, the title *Esq.* may be written after the name instead of *Mr.* before it, as, *Henry Price, Esq.*

229. In more familiar letters, when the salutation is less formal — such as, *Dear Mr. Price* — the name and address of the recipient are often written below the signature and at the left of the page; but in friendly letters, they are most frequently omitted altogether.

230. Some people have an unreasonable prejudice against beginning a letter with *I*. This form of beginning, however, is often the most natural; you would begin a conversation in this way; but the writer should avoid making himself unduly prominent throughout the letter. It is a mistake to believe that this can be accomplished merely by dropping the pronoun *I*. This omission results in a "telegraphic style," which is awkward and unpleasing and not permissible in any form of good writing, as "*Received your letter. Glad to hear from you and shall expect you Friday. Hope you are well.*"

231. The **Formal Closing** is usually in business letters *Yours truly* or *Very truly yours;* but in writing to a dignitary to whom great respect is due, *Respectfully yours* is sometimes the formal closing; in ordinary letters, however, it is not used.

232. In friendly letters the formal closing varies according to the relation between the writer and the recipient, as, — *Sincerely yours, Cordially yours, Yours faithfully, Yours affectionately,* etc.

233. The **Signature,** except in very informal letters, should be the name of the writer in the form which he uses in signing documents. When the writer f a business letter is a woman, she should indicate whether she is to be addressed as *Miss* or *Mrs.* If she is unmarried, she may do this by putting *Miss* in parentheses before her signature, as,

Very truly yours,
(Miss) Margaret W. Eliot.

234. If she is married, however, it is best to place below the signature and at the left her married name by which letters to her should be addressed, as,

Yours truly,
Edith F. Taylor.
Mrs. George Taylor.

235. Margin. All letters, whether formal or informal, should have a blank margin at least half an inch wide at the left side of each page. Some writers preserve a margin at the right side also.

236. Abbreviations of the names of titles, months, towns, states, etc., are sometimes used in business letters for the sake of brevity, but they are not usually permissible in friendly or informal letters. *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Dr.*, *Esq.*, and initial titles suffixed, like *Ph.D.*, are among the exceptions to this rule.

237. It should be noted that *Miss* is not an abbreviation, and therefore should not be followed by a period.

238. The word *Messrs.* should never be used except in business letters.

239. The **Envelope.** The name and full address of the recipient should be written as legibly as possible to insure the safe delivery of the letter. One may omit

all marks of punctuation at the end of the lines, or may place a period at the end of the last line and a comma at the end of each preceding line (see also ¶ 227).

Formal Invitations and Replies.

240. Formal invitations and replies are written in the third person, which must be kept consistently throughout. They have no heading at the beginning, no salutation, no formal closing, and no signature.

241. The address of the writer and the date may be written below and at the left. The day of the month should be written out in full wherever a date occurs, and the year is usually omitted. It is customary to date formal replies, but not the invitations.

242. No abbreviations, except *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, and *Dr.*, should be used.

243. Formal invitations and replies are usually arranged in lines of different lengths, so that the names of the sender and of the recipient are each on a separate line. This is always the custom when the invitation is engraved.

244. In accepting an invitation, the writer should repeat the day and hour mentioned, in order to prevent a mistake; but in declining an invitation, it is necessary to mention only the day.

245. Formal invitation.

Mrs. William Atterbury
requests the pleasure of
Miss Martha Brown's
company at dinner
on Wednesday, the sixth of March,
at half after seven o'clock.
15 East 57th Street.

246. Formal reply, accepting.

Miss Martha Brown
accepts with pleasure
the kind invitation of
Mrs. William Atterbury
to dinner on Wednesday evening,
the sixth of March,
at half after seven o'clock
520 Madison Avenue,
February twenty-third.

247. Formal reply, declining.

Miss Martha Brown
regrets that a previous engagement
makes it impossible for her
to accept the kind invitation of
Mrs. William Atterbury
to dinner on Wednesday evening,
the sixth of March.
520 Madison Avenue,
February twenty-third.

248. The mistake is frequently made in replying to formal invitations of putting the verbs of acceptance or declining in the future tense. The accepting or regretting an invitation is an action of the present, not of the future, and the phrases should not read, *will be delighted to accept*, or *regrets that he will be unable to accept*, but should be *is delighted to accept* or *accepts*, and *regrets that he is unable to accept.*

IX

PROSODY

THE rhythm of English verse is determined by the number and position of the accents. It is convenient, however, to think of the line as made up of certain feet or measures, following chiefly four types : —

249. The **Trochee,** consisting of one accented syllable and one unaccented ´ ˘

Once upon a midnight dreary.

250. The **Iamb,** consisting of one unaccented syllable and one accented ˘ ´

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day.

251. The **Anapest,** consisting of two unaccented syllables and one accented syllable ˘ ˘ ´

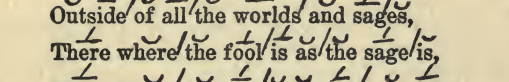
O, young Lochinvar has come out of the West.

252. The **Dactyl,** consisting of one accented syllable and two unaccented syllables ´ ˘ ˘

This is the forest primeval; the murmuring pines and the hemlocks

253. As soon as the rhythm of the line is well established in the reader's ear, variations of the feet may

occur in later lines. The first line should give the rhythm; after that any variations are possible which fit in with the rhythm.



Verse Decoration.

254. Rhyme, identity of sound at the end of the lines, reckoning from the last accent.

"The rest to some faint meaning make pre*tence,*
But Shadwell never deviates into *sense.*"

255. The rhyme of one accented syllable is called the *masculine rhyme.*

"Sate like a blooming Eastern *bride,*
In flower of youth and beauty's *pride.*"

256. The rhyme of one accented and one unaccented syllable (trochee) is called the *feminine rhyme.*

"Softly sweet, in Lydian *measures,*
Soon he soothed his soul to *pleasures.*"

257. Assonance, identity of vowel sound with difference of consonant sound at the end of lines, reckoning from the last accent.

"War, our consumption, was their gainful *trade;*
We inward bled, whilst they prolonged our *pain.*"

258. Alliteration, identity of consonant sound at the beginning of words.

"For who would *r*ead thy life that *r*eads thy *r*hymes?"

Stanza Forms.

259. The stanza is to verse what the sentence or the paragraph is to prose.

260. In most poems the stanza form is regular, — that is, each stanza matches the others in rhyme order and line length. In some poems, however, the stanzas vary with the changing moods and emotions, as in Wordsworth's "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality." For this free stanza there are no rules, and none but experienced poets should attempt it.

Of regular stanza forms there is an infinite variety. The most familiar are: —

261. The **Heroic Couplet,** two consecutive iambic lines, rhyming, with five accents to the line.

> "Great wits are sure to madness near allied,
> And thin partitions do their bounds divide."

262. The **Elegiac Stanza,** four iambic lines, of five accents to the line, rhyming alternately.

> "The curfew tolls the knell of parting day;
> The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea;
> The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
> And leaves the world to darkness and to me."

263. The **Italian Sonnet,** of fourteen iambic lines, five accents to the line. The first eight lines, called the **octave,** are made on two rhymes, in the order *a b b a a b b a.* The remaining six lines, called the **sextet,** are made on two or three rhymes, in practically any order the poet chooses, — most frequently, however, in the order *c d c d c d,* or *c d e c d e.*

In the octave the subject is introduced, frequently by a simile; in the sextet the application of the simile is

made, or the subject is so developed that the thought of the sonnet rises like a wave to a climax in the eighth line and recedes to the last line.

"As a fond mother, when the day is o'er,
Leads by the hand her little child to bed,
Half willing, half reluctant to be led,
And leave his broken playthings on the floor,
Still gazing at them through the open door,
Nor wholly reassured and comforted
By promises of others in their stead,
Which, though more splendid, may not please him more;
So Nature deals with us, and takes away
Our playthings one by one, and by the hand
Leads us to rest so gently, that we go
Scarce knowing if we wish to go or stay,
Being too full of sleep to understand
How far the unknown transcends the what we know."
— LONGFELLOW.

264. The **English Sonnet,** three elegiac stanzas followed by a heroic couplet.

"When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possess'd,
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings."
— SHAKSPERE.

265. The **Ballad Stanza,** four lines of four and three accents alternately, rhyming at the end of the second and fourth lines, or rhyming alternately in the order *a b a b*.

"I saw the new moon late yestreen
Wi' the auld moon in her arm,
And if we gang to sea, master,
I fear we'll suffer harm."

— OLD BALLAD.

"That is the land of lost content,
I see it shining plain,
The happy highways where I went
And cannot come again."

— A SHROPSHIRE LAD.

266. Blank verse, unrhymed iambic lines, five accents to the line, arranged in paragraphs of unrestricted length.

"Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste
Brought death into the World, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful Seat,
Sing, Heavenly Muse, that, on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That Shepherd who first taught the chosen seed
In the beginning how the heavens and earth
Rose out of Chaos: or, if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventrous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first
Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss,
And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support;
That, to the highth of this great argument,
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.

— MILTON.

X

COMMON ERRORS

267. Accept. Sometimes confused with *except. To accept* means to take when offered; *to except,* to leave out, to exclude.

We *accept* your gift.
We *except* you from criticism.

268. Affect. Often confused with *effect. To affect,* to influence, to act upon; *to effect,* to accomplish.

The hot sun *affects* some people.
We *effected* our purpose.

269. The noun *effect* means result.

The warning had the desired *effect.*

270. Aggravate. Means to increase in severity or intensity. Not to be used in the sense of *provoke, exasperate.*

271. Allude. Not to be used in the sense of *mention. Allude* means to refer indirectly or by suggestion; *mention,* to name without describing.

He did not *mention* the general in his speech, but everyone understood that he was *alluding* to him in his remarks on the war.

272. Alright. A common monstrosity for *all right* Formed by analogy with *already.* Illiteracy has few more legible autographs.

273. Anxious. Often incorrectly used for *eager. Anxious* means troubled or distressed in mind about something uncertain; intent on, with the idea of uneasi-

ness. *Eager* means impatient or ardently desiring to obtain or accomplish some end; intent on, with the idea of pleasure.

I am *eager* to see her, for I am very fond of her, and I have been *anxious* about her health.

274. Anybody else's. Possessive of *anybody else.* Some writers use the form *anybody's else,* but *anybody else's* is generally preferred, since the tendency in English is to form the possessive of a group of words by adding the sign of possession to the last word of the group, as, *The King of England's throne.*

275. As—as, so—as. The distinction usually made between these correlative adverbs is that *as — as* is used in affirmative statements; *so — as,* in negative ones.

He is *as* tall *as* his brother.
He is not *so* tall *as* his father.

276. Assist at. Not to be used in the sense of *were present.*

Many friends *were present* (not *assisted at*) the wedding.

277. Avocation. Often confused with *vocation. Vocation* means a man's calling or profession; *avocation,* his amusement or diversion from that vocation.

278. Awful. Not to be used in the slang sense of *very, exceedingly.*

279. Back of. Inelegant in the sense of *behind* or *at the back of.*

The garage is *behind,* or *at the back of* (not *back of*) the house.

280. Bad, badly. After verbs of incomplete predication, the adjective should be used instead of the adverb.

It tastes sweet (not *sweetly*).

281. After *feel* and *look*, it is permissible to use either *bad* or *badly*, but persons with a sense of humor may find reasons for avoiding both expressions (see ¶ 150).

282. Calculate. Not to be used in the colloquial sense of *intend* or *think*.

283. Can, may. Often confused. *Can* denotes ability; *may*, possibility or permission.

284. Combine. Not to be used in the sense of *combination*.

An important *combination* (not *combine*) of railroads.

285. Complected. Vulgar use in the sense of *complexion*.

She has a light *complexion*, not She is light *complected*.

286. Continual. Often confused with *continuous*. *Continual* means occurring in close succession, in regular and frequent repetition; *continuous*, without cessation or interruption.

To Thee Cherubim and Seraphim *continually* do cry Holy, Holy, Holy.

The *continuous* path of the stars.

287. Deadly. Often confused with *deathly*.

288. Demean. Means to behave or conduct (oneself). Incorrectly used for *debase*, *disgrace*, or *degrade*.

289. Differ from. Should be distinguished from *differ with*. *Differ from* means to be unlike, dissimilar; *differ with*, to disagree in opinion, to dissent.

290. Different than. Common error for *different from*.

It is *different from* (not *than*) the one I last used.

291. Different to. Commonly used in England for *different from*. Not accepted in the United States.

292. Don't. Contraction for *do not.* Should not be used for *does not.*

293. Each, every. Should not be used with the plural of pronouns or verbs.

Each of the boys *has his* own book (not *have their* own books).

294. Either, neither. Denote one of two, not one of three or more. One of three or more is denoted by *any one* or *none.*

I saw James, and Tom, and George, and *any one* of them (not *either*) is willing to help.

Here are the three pencils, but *none* (not *neither*) of them will write.

295. Either — or, neither — nor. When these correlative conjunctions are used with a singular noun or pronoun, they should be followed by a singular verb form which agrees with the nearest noun or pronoun.

Either he or she *is* going.
Either he or I *am* going.
Either he or you *are* going.

296. Elegant. Not to be used to denote every form of approval.

297. Else. Should be followed by *than*, not *but.*

It is nothing *else than* (not *but*) vanity.

298. Emigrant. Frequently confused with *immigrant.* When a person migrates from a country, he is an *emigrant;* when to a country, he is an *immigrant.*

299. Enthuse. Colloquial verb formation from *enthusiasm.* To be avoided.

300. Exceptional. Often confused with *exceptionable. Exceptional* means contrary to the rule, unusual, uncommon; *exceptionable*, open to exception, objectionable.

301. Expect. Not to be used for *think, believe,* or *suppose.*

302. Farther. Not to be confused with *further. Farther* is the comparative form of *far,* and is applied to distance; *further* means additional.

I will go that far and no *farther* (not *further*).
He gave the matter *further* consideration.

303. Firstly. As *first* is an adverb as well as an adjective, it does not need the suffix *ly. First* is the correct form.

304. Fix. Means to fasten, make secure, establish. Not to be used loosely in the sense of *repair, arrange,* or *prepare.*

305. Flee, fly, flow. Frequently confused. Principal parts:

Flee, fled, fled.
Fly, flew, flown.
Flow, flowed, flowed.

306. Gentleman, lady. Not to be used merely to distinguish sex.

Saleswoman (not *saleslady*), *business men* (not *gentlemen*).

307. Some people who would not use these particular words are guilty of the following:

In this country *gentlemen* vote; whether or not *ladies* will is a question."

308. Got. Means to acquire, gain possession of. Not to be used to denote mere possession. There is an unreasonable prejudice against the form *got;* it is perfectly correct. Principal parts:

Get, got, got or *gotten.*

309. Guess. Not to be used colloquially in the sense of *think, expect, intend.*

310. Handfuls. Correct plural of *handful.*

311. Hear to it. Not to be used in the colloquial sense of *consent to it,* or *allow it.*

312. Hung. The verb *hang* is peculiar in that it has two separate forms for its preterite and past participle to express two special meanings. The forms *hang, hung, hung,* express the usual meaning of suspension from something, but *hang, hanged, hanged* denote an execution.

The clothes were *hung* in the closet.
The murderer was *hanged.*

313. I. Purists insist on *It is I,* but *It is me* is now generally accepted in speech and in informal writing. *It is him* or *It is her,* however, is not permissible.

314. In. Often incorrectly used for *into. Into* denotes motion toward, or tendency; *in,* position or state.

He is *in* his house.
They went *into* (not *in*) his house.

315. Individual. Means a single person or thing as a unit.

The *individual* has to be considered as well as the corporation.

316. Not to be used to denote one person merely.

He is a queer man (not *individual*).

317. Invite. Vulgarism for *invitation.*

318. It's. Contraction for *it is.* Not to be confused with *its,* the possessive pronoun. Note that the possessive case of pronouns is not formed with an apostrophe.

Ours, yours, hers, his, its, theirs.

319. Kind of a, sort of a. Vulgar error for *kind of, sort of.*

He is the right *sort of* (not *sort of a*) person.
What *kind of* (not *kind of a*) fish have you this morning?
I like this *kind of* (not *kind of a*) music.

320. Lay, lie. As the present tense of *lay* and the preterite of *lie* are the same, these verbs are often confused. Principal parts:

Lay (to put down), *laid, laid.*
Lie (to rest), *lay, lain.*

321. Liable, likely, and apt. *Liable* implies that what may happen will be unfortunate or unpleasant.

That sail boat is *liable* to upset.

322. *Likely* implies strong probability, and usually has a favorable meaning.

An industrious man is *likely* to succeed.

323. *Apt* implies a natural fitness or tendency.

A good-natured person is *apt* to make friends easily.

324. Like. Often incorrectly used for *as.* *Like* has the force of a preposition, and is properly used only with nouns or their equivalents.

She thinks *as* I do.
He looks *like* his father.

325. Loan, lend. *Loan* is the noun; *lend,* the verb. Many writers, however, use *loan* as well as *lend* as a verb, reserving *loan* for large values, and *lend* for insignificant things.

He *loaned* him a thousand dollars.
Lend me a pin.

326. Loose. Frequently misspelled for *lose.* The sound of the vowel in *lose* probably suggests the double *oo.*

327. Lot, lots. Not to be used colloquially for *a great many.*

328. Nice. Implies discrimination.

He has a *nice* taste in dress.

329. Not to be used colloquially to express every kind of approval.

It is a pleasant (not *nice*) day.
She is a charming (not *nice*) girl.

330. Nothing like. Not to be used adverbially for *not nearly.*

Those buildings are *not nearly* (not *nothing like*) so tall as those we saw in New York.

331. Only. Should be placed carefully in the sentence to prevent ambiguity. Note the difference in meaning of the following sentences.

Only I saw him to-day; the others could not meet him.
I *only* saw him to-day; I had no opportunity to speak to him.
I saw *only* him to-day, as his brother was ill.
I saw him *only* to-day; I could not make an appointment yesterday.

332. Party. Not to be used vulgarly in the sense of a *man* or *person.*

He is a cheerful man (not *party*).

333. Plenty. Not to be used colloquially for *enough.*

I have *enough* (not *plenty*) to do.

334. Posted. Not to be used colloquially for *informed.*

He is very well *informed* (not *posted*) about politics.

335. Practical. Often confused with *practicable. Practical* means pertaining to actual use; *practicable,* possible of execution.

336. Presume. Not to be confused with *expect. Presume* means to assume as true without direct knowledge, to take as probable; *expect*, to look forward to as certain or probable, to anticipate in thought.

337. Principle. Frequently confused with *principal. Principle* is a noun, meaning a general truth or proposition, or a fundamental cause. *Principal* is a noun or adjective; as a noun, it means one who takes a leading part, or one who is at the head of a school; as an adjective, it means first, or highest in rank or importance.

338. Propose. Means to offer. Should not be used for *purpose* or *intend.*

I don't *intend* (not *propose*) to be imposed on.

339. Raise. Not to be used colloquially as a noun meaning *increase.*

He has had an *increase of* (not *raise in*) salary.

340. Real. Not to be used in the sense of *very.*

It's a *very* (not *real*) cold day.

341. Reckon. Not to be used in the colloquial sense of *think, believe.*

342. Recollect of, remember of. The use of the preposition *of* after the verbs *recollect* and *remember* is considered a vulgarism, but this use is sometimes found in good writers.

343. Sang, sung. Principal parts:

Sing, sang or sung, sung.

344. The form *sang* is preferable as the preterite.

He sang well preferable to *He sung well.*

345. It is wrong, however, to say, *He has sang.*

346. Shall, will. Even the educated commonly fail to distinguish between these words. The future tenses of all verbs use *shall* in the first person, *will* in the second and the third. This denotes merely a future state or action.

347. To express determination, *will* is used in the first person; *shall*, in the second and the third.

348. In questions the form is used which is expected in the reply.

"*Will* you promise?" "I *will*."
"*Shall* you be at home this evening?" "I *shall* be."

349. Should, would. In general, the uses of *should* and *would* are parallel to those of *shall* and *will*. *Should* is also used to express obligation or duty.

I *should* (or *ought to*) go.

350. Sit, set. Verbs frequently confused. Principal parts:

Sit, sat, sat (intransitive verb).
Set, set, set (transitive verb).

351. Splendid. Not to be used indiscriminately for everything admired.

352. Spoonfuls. Correct plural of *spoonful*.

353. Stop. Not to be used in the sense of *stay*. *Stop* is to cease moving, the opposite of start; *stay*, to continue in a place.

The train *stopped* at New Haven.
I am *staying* (not *stopping*) in Boston.

354. Team. Two or more beasts of burden harnessed together to draw some one or something. Improperly used for one horse and wagon.

355. These kind, these sort. Vulgar error for *this kind, this sort.*

356. Very. Not generally used alone before past participles.

I am *very much* disappointed (not *very* disappointed).

357. Ways. Not to be used colloquially for *way.*

The church is a long *way* (not *ways*) from here.

358. Worse. Not to be used for *more.*

I dislike tea *more* (not *worse*) than coffee.

359. You and I, you and me. When used as the joint object of a preposition, or the joint subject or object of a verb, these pronouns should be carefully declined as though they were used singly.

He spoke to *you and me* (not *you and I*).
They are more clever than *you and I* (not *you and me*).

To avoid this last error, complete the sentence by adding mentally the verb which is understood.

They are more clever than *you and I* [*are*].

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